

ISSORIA LATHONIA L.:
A KENTISH QUEEN OF SPAIN

By CHRIS SAMSON*

The Queen of Spain Fritillary, *Issoria lathonia* L., ranges through the Palaearctic from western Europe, Himalaya to western China; with affinities in montane areas of Africa and South America. It is a notable migrant, although of very infrequent occurrence on our shores. Due to this factor and its undoubted aesthetic charm, a sighting of this butterfly on the wing in green English pastures will always be a foremost ambition of any field-lepidopterist, young or old. Sadly, this experience is seldom fulfilled; however, a regular field-trip one warm summer day was to prove most irregular for Nicholas Hodges, a knowledgeable young naturalist, well versed in the wildlife of Dover and its environs.

The reward came in mid. July of 1979 during a somewhat weary trek, ascending the picturesque chalk downs above Temple Ewell, north-west of Dover. Second-brood *Lasiommata megera* L. predominated along Beech woodland and Blackthorn scrub, bordering the exposed downland. Indeed, it was the abundance of these fresh Wall Browns that nearly led Nicholas Hodges to dismiss his Queen of Spain as one of the above Satyrids. He was thus favourably surprised on closer inspection: a fine large female, with silver ventral spots gleaming in the sunlight. This specimen, kindly donated to the former Saruman Museum of Beckley E. Sussex, is now in the famous Smart Collection, until recently housed in the National Butterfly Museum, Bramber, W. Sussex.

The Hodges *lathonia* is not only the most recent capture for that species represented in the above collection, but also our most recent Kentish record, the last example having been taken in 1964 or 1965 at Langdon Bay, Dover (Chalmers-Hunt 1980).

References

Chalmers-Hunt, J. M. 1980. *The Butterflies and Moths of Kent*, Vol. 3 and Supplement, p.223.

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MACROGLOSSUM STELLATARUM L. IN APRIL. — MIGRANT OR HIBERNATOR? — At about midday on 8th April 1984 in Eastbourne. I noted a single Hummingbird Hawkmoth hovering about garden blooms. I have neither seen nor heard of any other migrant species so far this year, so wonder if this may be a hibernated example. — M. PARSONS, The Forge, Russells Green, Ninfield, nr. Battle, E. Sussex.